

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 00385 311047Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 W
-----311302Z 121272 /42
R 311007Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2874

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: LE, SA
SUBJECT: AUB VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA

1. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED FOLLOWING LETTER ADDRESSED TO
AMBASSADOR PORTER FROM ACTING PRESIDENT OF AUB, JAMES COWAN.

2. QUOTE: DEAR MR AMBASSADOR: THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT HAS CONTINUED OPERATIONS THROUGHOUT THE NINETEEN
MONTHS OF CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON. ADMITTEDLY, THE OPERATIONS
AT TIMES WERE SHAKY; WE WERE DOWN FOR SEVERAL MONTHS TO LESS
THAN HALF OF OUR FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENT BODY, BUT MOST
IMPORTANT OF ALL, THE UNIVERSITY SURVIVED.
NOW, IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF INCREASING SECURITY IN LEBANON,
WE MUST TURN OUR ATTENTION TO SOLVING THE UNIVERSITY'S SHORT
AND LONG TERM FINANCIAL PROBLEMS. THE DEFICIT STANDS NOW AT
OVER 10 MILLION DOLLARS, OUR PLANS TO SELL AND/OR DEVELOP
SOME OF OUR LAND HAVE BEEN NEGATED BY THE WAR, AND TO
PROCEED WITH ANY COMFORT INTO THE COMING THREE YEARS, WE
NEED TO RAISE 15 TO 20 MILLION DOLLARS. IN THE LONG
TERM, WE MUST BUILD UP ENDOWMENT FUNDS WHICH AT PRESENT
ARE MEAGRE IN RELATION TO THE TOTAL BUDGET.
I PLAN TO TRAVEL TO SAUDI ARABIA NEXT MONTH TO
DISCUSS, WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND FRIENDS, NOT ONLY
OUR FINANCIAL PLIGHT BUT ALSO WAYS IN WHICH THE
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UNIVERSITY CAN BETTER SERVE THE KINGDOM. MY SCHEDULE AT
PRESENT IS TO ARRIVE IN JEDDAH ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, TO
SPEND SATURDAY, THE 12TH IN JEDDAH AND GO ON TO RIYADH
FOR MEETINGS ON THE 13TH. I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO SEE
YOU ON FEBRUARY 12TH TO PRESENT MORE DETAILS ON THE
UNIVERSITY, AND TO SEEK YOUR ADVICE ON AN OVERALL
APPROACH FOR ASSISTANCE FROM SAUDI ARABIA.

HOPING FOR A POSTIIVE REPLY FROM YOU, I AM
SINCERELY YOURS, JAMES W. COWAN, PRESIDENT. END QUOTE.

3. WE HOPE AMBASSADOR PORTER WILL BE ABLE TO RECEIVE
COWAN AND WOULD BE HAPPY TO PASS ON THE AMBASSADOR'S REPLY.
LANE

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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